

TESTING AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION ON THE WORK OF THE UNITED  
NATIONS

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Testing American Public Opinion on the Work of the United Nations

What do Americans think about the United Nations? Social scientists have put forward an array of viewpoints on the subject, focusing on such things as partisan differences in the attitudes of Americans towards the work of the UN to public scepticism of the organization's objectives and effectiveness. I argue, in this thesis, that public opinion is a causal factor because of its potential to influence political outcomes. For example, public opinion can influence the effectiveness of the UN's work in three main ways: 1) It can serve as an instrument for establishing the credibility of the international body's work and/ or in discrediting the system as a whole; 2) it can serve as a link between the US and the UN in encouraging support for the United Nations in one of its most important members; and 3) Public opinion can stress the importance of a particular issue and pressure influential actors to take action. I choose to focus solely on the United States in this thesis despite the UN's 192 other member states for the reason that overwhelmingly negative assessments have been offered of the organization since the Iraq War. The research depicting this idea points to a decline in American popular support for the UN in the past decade. By investigating six different hypotheses which seek to explain this possible decline, I conclude that American public support for the international body after the Iraq war has declined and can best be explained by hypothesis 3 on inadequate coverage of UN matters in the media and hypothesis 5 on the thought that the UN is "ineffective"; although this presumed decline is not steady due to opinion level variations in the recent decade.

Scott Pegg, PH.D, Chair

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## **Acronyms/ Abbreviations**

UN- United Nations

UNAMIR- UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda

UNAMIH- UN Assistance Mission in Haiti

UNHCR- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNMIK- UN Mission in Kosovo

UNGA- United Nations General Assembly

UNS- United Nations Secretariat

UNCT- United Nations Country Team

MONUC- United Nations Mission in the DRC

DPKO- Department of Peacekeeping Operations

DFS- Department of Field Support

ISF- Integrated Strategic Framework

IPCC- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

ICC- International Criminal Court

WG- Working Group

## **Chapter One: Introduction, Research Question, and Aims**

Fellow delegates, we come together as united nations with a choice to make. We can renew the international system that has enabled so much progress, or we can allow ourselves to be pulled back by an undertow of instability. We can reaffirm our collective responsibility to confront global problems, or be swamped by more and more outbreaks of instability. And for America, the choice is clear: We choose hope over fear.

--President Barack Obama

The United Nations and my country share the deepest commitments. Both the American Declaration of Independence and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaim the equal value and dignity of every human life. And both of our founding documents affirm that this bright line between justice and injustice...between right and wrong...is the same in every age, and every culture, and every nation.

--President George W. Bush

### **Introduction**

How can we explain the decline in US popular support for the United Nations?

This research question in analyzing public support for the organization has been studied by social scientists in an attempt to understand this potential occurrence.<sup>1</sup> The works undertaken by these social scientists provide an array of viewpoints on the possible decline in popular support for the United Nations. As this thesis shows, numerous elements play a part in this potential decline in support. Founded in 1945 with high ambitions to promote peace, prosperity, and security in the world, the United Nations' approval ratings appear to not be as fervent as they used to be after the Iraq War.<sup>2</sup> Statistics provided by the Gallup Poll show that UN approval ratings have varied substantially after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on U.S. Soil, from 58% in 2001 to 26% in

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<sup>1</sup>Lyon, Alynna. "Rejecting One's Protege? American Media, Public Opinion and the United Nations." International Studies Association (2008): n. p1-29. . Web.

<sup>2</sup>Newport, Frank. "Americans Continue to see U.N. as a poor problem solver." Gallup. P1-1, February 2015. Web.

2009.<sup>3</sup> This drop in public attitudes has been attributed to the “clash” between the George W. Bush administration and the United Nations’ as well as the “disparaging” manner in which Bush treated the UN by attacking Iraq in March 2003 without UN authorization.<sup>4</sup> Rasmussen attests to this decline by presenting 49% of Americans who view the organization unfavorably compared to 42% who have a more favorable view of the UN.<sup>5</sup>

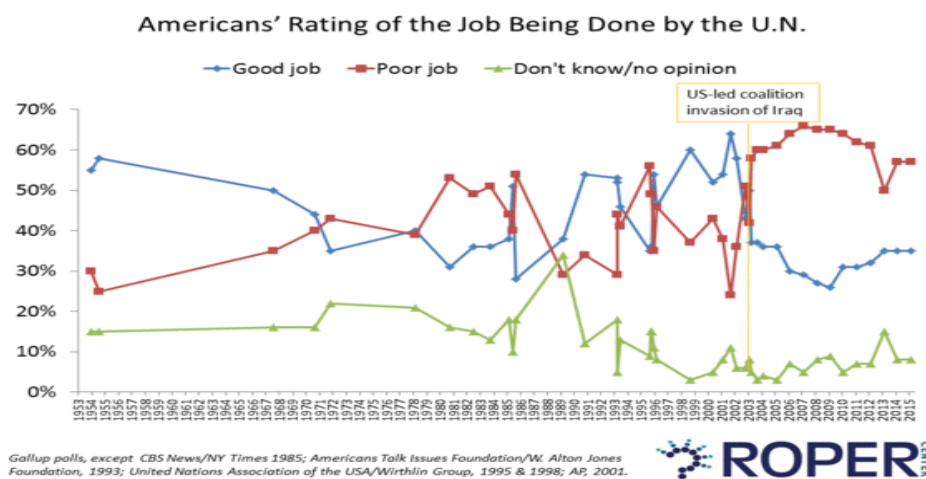


Figure 1

Figure 1 depicts a job approval ratings decrease after the US and UN could not reach a consensus on military action against Iraq after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. As illustrated above, a 2003 Gallup poll found that the UN Security Council’s lack of support for the invasion of Iraq led to 55% of Americans having a less favorable view of

<sup>3</sup> Newport, Frank. “Americans Continue to see U.N. as a poor problem solver.” Gallup. P1-1, February 2015. Web.

<sup>4</sup> Schlesinger, Stephen. “Bush’s Stealth United Nations Policy.” World Policy Journal. 25.2, p1-9, Summer 2008. Web.

<sup>5</sup> [No author] “49% View United Nations Unfavorably.” Rasmussen Reports. June 2012, p1-1.



the UN.<sup>6</sup> Today, the number of Americans attesting to the UN's poor job is at 58% and has continued at historic highs since the 2003 poll findings, with an increase in unfavorable views ("poor job") for the UN between 2005-2007, a steady decrease between 2007-2012, a sharp decrease from 2012-2013, a slight increase from 2013-2014, and a steady level between last year (2014) and the current year.<sup>7</sup> This may also imply that support for the organization is sensitive to events as the decline in favorable views as a result of the "clash" between the UN and the Bush administration in 2003 suggests.<sup>8</sup>

This prompted me to focus solely on the United States in analyzing public support for the organization or the lack thereof due to the negative assessments given to the organization in the aftermath of the failure to reach a consensus on the use of force in the Iraq War in 2003.<sup>9</sup> The change over time in American public opinion of the United Nations is a phenomenon rooted in US and UN relations. Although, public support for the United Nations can be analyzed globally for the support for the organization also varies widely among its current member states.<sup>10</sup> I chose to focus on the US due to the shift in viewpoints for the organization in the recent decade, after the US-led war on terrorism.<sup>11</sup> The evidence for the low American public approval of the United Nations system dwells within an array of academic works and scholarly investigations. The potential decline in American support for the UN will be analyzed with two main elements: the personal US and UN relationship and the attitudes regarding the overarching objectives of the

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<sup>6</sup> [No author] "Americans' Rating of the Job Being Done By the U.N." Gallup. 2003, p1-1.

<sup>7</sup> [No author] "Americans' Rating of the Job Being Done By the U.N." Gallup. 2003, p1-1.

<sup>8</sup> [No author] "Americans' Rating of the Job Being Done By the U.N." Gallup. 2003, p1-1.

<sup>9</sup> Holyk, Gregory. "The Polls-Trends: U.S. Public Support for the United Nations", *Public Opinion Quarterly*. 74.1, p168-189. March 2010. Web.

<sup>10</sup> Kondapi, C. "Indian Opinion of the United Nations." *International Organization* 5.4 (1951): 709-21. Web.

<sup>11</sup> De Chazournes, Laurence B. "The United Nations on Shifting Sands: About the Rebuilding of Iraq." *International Law Forum du droit International*, 5.4, p254-261. Nov 2003.

international organization and measuring its presumed “effectiveness” and job performance.

Prior to tackling these two elements to elaborate upon the central aim of this thesis, however, it is important to highlight the smaller units composed in these two broader categories. American public support of the UN can be said to originate from the contribution provided by the United States to the United Nations; a concept that falls between the US and UN relationship as well as the overall effectiveness of the organization. While some believe that this happening will prove to offer up some substantial benefits for the states in the long run, others are critical of the measure.<sup>12</sup> Author Brett D. Schaefer provides his views on the financial support from the U.S. given to the United Nations peacekeeping operations, in the structure of commentary accounts.<sup>13</sup> The US funding of the United Nations system has been the largest among its member states since the founding of the political organization.<sup>14</sup> This is an element contributing to the overall unfavorable opinions of the UN from the general American public. As my research determined, however, the amount of funds donated to the organization as a whole is not as large as it is often presumed by the international body’s opponents.<sup>15</sup> Although the size of the US contribution to the UN budget may serve as a potential variable in explaining declining popular support, it is problematic in that if the share of the United States’ contribution remains constant, this constant cannot explain the variable of a recent decline in public support for the United Nations.

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<sup>12</sup> Schaefer, Brett D. "U.S. Funding of the United Nations Reaches All-Time High." The Heritage Foundation. *Foreign Aid and Development*, p1-1, 13 Aug. 2010. Web.

<sup>13</sup> Schaefer, Brett D. "U.S. Funding of the United Nations Reaches All-Time High." The Heritage Foundation. *Foreign Aid and Development*, p1-1, 13 Aug. 2010. Web.

<sup>14</sup> Schaefer, Brett D. "U.S. Funding of the United Nations Reaches All-Time High." *The Heritage Foundation*. *Foreign Aid and Development*, p1-1, 13 Aug. 2010. Web.

<sup>15</sup> Bond, Alison. "U.S. Funding of the United Nations: Arrears Payments as an Indicator of Multilateralism." *Berkeley Journal of International Law* 21.3 (2003): n. p703-714. Web.

According to the United Nations Committee on Contributions, the US (at 22 percent), is the largest contributor in the scale of assessments, and has held this ranking since the year 2001.<sup>16</sup> Between 1994 and 2001, US contribution was even higher at 25 percent before it was lowered to 22 percent in 2001.<sup>17</sup> The data presented by the committee shows a great amount of consistency in terms of the US contribution to the UN budget. The fact that the US is the largest contributor to the UN budget may cause a feeling of unfairness among the American public and therefore lead to a decline in popular support for the organization; this is the first of the six hypotheses to be tested in this thesis and will be explained further in upcoming sections of this paper.

The second of the six hypotheses is whether or not the level of popular support for the UN is based on the thought that the UN impedes on US sovereignty. Authors addressing this argument propose that this hypothesis cannot sufficiently be used in explaining a decline in popular support for the organization, due to the idea that state sovereignty is constantly evolving.<sup>18</sup> The UN evidently is a rather large body, whose main achievements are not always seen in every day news reports. One would need to develop a profound interest in its work in order to monitor its performance; as opposed to depending upon possibly biased news reports for or against the UN's work. The uncertainty in the media that I speak of, as a potential player in the decline in public support for the UN, is reiterated in the works highlighted in this literature review; this idea also serves as "hypothesis 3" in this paper and will be revisited in the upcoming

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<sup>16</sup> [No author] "Regular Budget and Working Capital Fund Assessments 1994-2015." UN Committee on Contributions. New York. P1-1. 2015.

<sup>17</sup> [No author] "Regular Budget and Working Capital Fund Assessments 1994-2015." UN Committee on Contributions. New York. P1-1. 2015.

<sup>18</sup> Wind, Marlene. "Challenging Sovereignty? The USA and the establishment of the International Criminal Court." *Ethics and Global Politics*. 2.2, p83-108, 96, 2009.

sections. Hypothesis 4 of this paper analyzes the claim that international trust is a factor in explaining the decline in American popular support for the United Nations.<sup>19</sup> The thought that the decline in U.S. public support for the United Nations is due to the popular belief that the U.N. is ineffective is “hypothesis 5” of this paper; it is based upon UN performance as a whole, focusing on the notion that Americans in fact believe that the UN is needed but doubt its effectiveness.<sup>20</sup> Lastly, hypothesis 6 is based on the thought that the level of popular support can be explained by the 2002-2003 Iraq War and the failure of the US to secure UN Security Council approval of it.<sup>21</sup>

*What is the relationship between the United States and the United Nations?*

One variable and potential factor to explain the possible unfavorable outlook of the United Nations from the American public rests upon UN and US relations as a whole. Though some speculate that the charter of the United Nations embodies American principles in a number of ways, this idea has been “shaken up” due to past encounters and conflicts concerning the involvement in wars, such as the Iraq War.<sup>22</sup> This thought has encouraged the international community to go so far as to label the UN as an instrument in American policy.<sup>23</sup> The close relationship, grounded upon mutual goals, is said to have flourished and strengthened the dynamics between the United Nations and the United States over the years, between periods of friendship and friction in the wake of 9/11

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<sup>19</sup> Brewer, Paul et al. “Do Americans Trust Other Nations? A Panel Study”, *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 86, No. 1, p36-51, March 2005

<sup>20</sup> Jones, Jeffrey M. and Wendt, Nathan. “Americans Say UN is needed, but Doubt Its Effectiveness.” *Gallup*. P1-1, March 2013.

<sup>21</sup> Holyk, Gregory. “The Polls-Trends: U.S. Public Support for the United Nations”, *Public Opinion Quarterly*. 74.1, p168-189. March 2010. Web.

<sup>22</sup> Lyon, Alynna. “Rejecting One's Protege? American Media, Public Opinion and the United Nations.” *International Studies Association* (2008): n. p1-29, 7.

<sup>23</sup> Lyon, Alynna. “Rejecting One's Protege? American Media, Public Opinion and the United Nations.” *International Studies Association* (2008): n. p1-29, 3.

attacks.<sup>24</sup> The way in which this relationship was strengthened has been explained as a result of multilateral cooperation in UN peace operations. The friction, Howard, explains emerged as a result of the Bush administration and the United Nations being at odds in regards to the use of force in the Iraq war, although she recognizes that unfavourable attitudes towards the UN existed prior to the war due to issues concerning collective security and peacekeeping.<sup>25</sup> James Sutterlin elucidates Howard's points by proposing that the United States and the United Nations form a stronger partnership in promoting the pursuit of diplomacy throughout the world.<sup>26</sup>

The United Nations is rooted in core democratic values on the basis of freedom of expression and building a safer and more secure world by focusing on areas such as security, health, and the environment.<sup>27</sup> The US-UN relationship is also deemed critical on Bellamy, Morrison, and Shay's account for a productive partnership with the United Nations can allow for the United States to pursue its global interests more effectively than it could on its own.<sup>28</sup> This idea makes for the negative viewpoint of the work of the UN from the American public, a rather puzzling thought for how can we explain a possible decline in American public support for the UN in the light of the proposed strong relations that the US and UN hold, as portrayed by the authors above?

Assessing the determinants of the negative American public attitudes towards the UN can prove to be somewhat difficult if all appears to be well. What do scholars truly

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<sup>24</sup> Howard, Lise M. "Sources of Change in United States-United Nations Relations." *Global Governance*.16.4, p485-503. Dec 2010.

<sup>25</sup> Howard, Lise M. "Sources of Change in United States-United Nations Relations." *Global Governance*.16.4, p485-503. Dec 2010.

<sup>26</sup>Sutterlin, James S. "United Nations Relations with the United States: A Nettlesome Continuum Between Multifaceted Partners." *American Foreign Policy Interests*.29.4, p257-265. Jul/Aug 2007.

<sup>27</sup>Bellamy, Carol, David Morrison, and Christopher Shays. "The U.S Relationship with the United Nations." *The Yale Law Journal* 55.5 (1946): 1291-1317. Web.

<sup>28</sup>Bellamy, Carol, David Morrison, and Christopher Shays."The U.S Relationship with the United Nations." *The Yale Law Journal* 55.5 (1946): 1291-1317. Web.

mean by “sovereignty”? Sovereignty is a term that potentially has a different meaning to different cultures and countries. Sinclair and Byers attest to this by defining the term as 1) a conception that privileges the political independence of governments and 2) a conception that privileges the rights of the people more than the governments especially in cases of human rights violations.<sup>29</sup> Much priority has been given to the first point in defining sovereignty. This sense of “responsibility” taken away from the US may serve as a determinant in the unimpressed nature of American public opinion towards the UN;<sup>30</sup> although social scientists, such as Makinda, argue that state sovereignty is an evolving concept which legitimizes both internal political control within a state as well as the mechanisms for enhancing international order and security; therefore the UN does not impede on a state’s sovereignty.<sup>31</sup>

Lyon (2008) explores both sides of the spectrum in analyzing the decline in public support for the UN by explaining the UN /US relationship with the help of polling data: including reviewing historical data on the subject and studying the reason behind the deterioration of this powerful relationship. She concludes that impactful elements such as the increasingly negative media coverage of the institution, the third hypothesis of this paper, and decreasing UN literacy rates in regards to knowing what the UN actually does, contribute to this decline. Lyon’s highlighted elements serve as the targets to “point our fingers at”, so to speak, as the causes of the decline in UN support; they are also the areas that we can attempt to improve, in order to investigate and analyse the public’s opinion.

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<sup>29</sup> Sinclair, Adriana and Michael Byers. “When US Scholars Speak of ‘Sovereignty’, What Do They Mean?” *Political Studies*. 55.2, p318-340, June 2007. Web.

<sup>30</sup> Lyon, Alynna. "Rejecting One's Protege? American Media, Public Opinion and the United Nations." *International Studies Association* (2008): n. p1-29. Web

<sup>31</sup> Makunda, Samuel M. “The United Nations and State Sovereignty: Mechanism for Managing International Security.” *Australian Journal of Political Science*. 33.1, p101-115. March 1998.

## **Research Question and Aims of Thesis**

How do we explain the decline in popular support for the United Nations?

Answering this particular research question with empirical evidence from previous scholarly works is the primary goal of this thesis. The main view of the organization, as it will be depicted throughout this paper is a generally unfavorable outlook; meaning that the number of Americans in support for UN appears to be clouded by a greater number of sceptical views towards the organization. This thesis will question whether the United Nations is, indeed, “worthy” of support from the American public; and it will tackle the various mechanisms adopted by the organization in reaching its goals. These adopted tools have certainly been brought into question when measuring its overall effectiveness and performance, as it will be elaborated upon in upcoming sections of this thesis.

## Chapter Two: Examining Public Opinion and Previous Research

Before diving into the subject matter, however, one may ask: why does public opinion of the UN matter? Gerard Herberichs (1966) claimed in the mid-1960s that public opinion serves as a persuasive instrument, forcing elites to “live in fear” and urging them to take action on the issues stressed by the public.<sup>32</sup> Herberichs also emphasized the importance of using the power of public opinion for enhancing the support for international organizations.<sup>33</sup> Decades later, this claim appears to still hold true to a number of social scientists, although others speculate that public opinion is, in fact, of low relevance in explaining US foreign policy, which they believe is more heavily influenced by other stakeholders including internationally oriented business leaders and other experts.<sup>34</sup>

Upon being appointed, former Secretary General of the United Nations Kofi Annan testified to the importance of public support for the UN to become an influential organization.<sup>35</sup> To encourage more public support for the international body, Annan orchestrated a number of public relations campaigns between 1997 and 2006 in the hopes of promoting the image of the United Nations.<sup>36</sup> His goal of transforming the organization through more public support transposed to his successor, Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon, who advocates for a “stronger presence” from the public in fulfilling

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<sup>32</sup> Herberichs, Gerard. “On Theories of Public Opinion and International Organization.” *Public Opinion Quarterly*.30.4, p624-636, 1966.

<sup>33</sup> Herberichs, Gerard. “On Theories of Public Opinion and International Organization.” *Public Opinion Quarterly*.30.4, p624-636, 1966.

<sup>34</sup> Jacobs, Lawrence R. and Page, Benjamin I. “Who Influences U.S. Foreign Policy?”, *American Political Science Review*, 99.1, p107-123, February 2005

<sup>35</sup> Young Joon Lim. “Promoting the Image of the United Nations.” *Journalism History*.40.3, p187-196. Fall 2014

<sup>36</sup> Young Joon Lim. “Promoting the Image of the United Nations.” *Journalism History*.40.3, p187-196. Fall 2014



organizational goals.<sup>37</sup> In this thesis, I argue that public opinion, in analyzing support for the United Nations, is important because of its potential to influence the future health of the organization due to three main reasons: 1) It can potentially serve as an instrument in establishing credibility of the international body's work and/ or in discrediting the system as a whole; 2) it can possibly serve as a link between the US and the UN in encouraging support for the United Nations; and 3) public opinion can potentially stress the importance of a particular issue which can pressure influential actors both within and outside of the organization to take action. First, public opinion is important for its potential to establish credibility for the United Nations work. By emphasizing the organization's main successes in regards to peacekeeping, adopting measures to effectively address climate change concerns, and much more, it can possibly validate the work that the UN engages in and encourage more public support.<sup>38</sup> Second, public opinion can potentially serve as the base upon which the level of support for the UN is raised; the more validation of the UN's work from the public, the more popular support for the organization. Bridging the gap between American sceptics of the organization and its supporters may depend upon the impact of public opinion.<sup>39</sup> This idea is highlighted at great length in Herberichs' case study when he emphasizes the importance of public opinion for it serves as a channel between leaders and international organizations alike.<sup>40</sup> Thirdly, public opinion can potentially pressure leaders to take action in stressing

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<sup>37</sup> Jonah, James O.C. "Ki-Moon as Key Player." *Harvard International Review*.33.1, p59-63. Spring 2011

<sup>38</sup> Lyon, Alynna. "Through a Glass Darkly? Public Opinion and the Relationship between the United States and the United Nations." *International Studies Association*. Issue 1, p1-24. 2006

<sup>39</sup> Jaeger, Hans-Martin. "World Opinion and the Founding of the United Nations: Governmentalizing International Politics", p589-618. *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 14, No. 4, December 2008. Web

<sup>40</sup> Herberichs, Gerard. "On Theories of Public Opinion and International Organization." *Public Opinion Quarterly*.30.4, p624-636, 1966.

particular issues. This idea, also addressed by Herberichs', <sup>41</sup> is analyzed in Goldsmith and Horiuchi's case study when they provide the theoretical argument that public opinion does affect the construction and implementation of policies, although they later bring the element of "issue salience" into the equation meaning that the public tends to pressure leaders to act only on the most salient issues. <sup>42</sup>

Analyzing public opinion is an essential step towards understanding the underlying factors explaining American public opinion on the organization. Public opinion can be viewed as a factor influencing both leaders and states alike in approving or disapproving the measures undertaken by those particular actors. For example, Hans-Martin Jaeger outlines public opinion as a form of moral authority meant to either restrain or strengthen sovereign states; though its significance, he emphasizes, is gravely diminished in the realist world which deems this specific aspect of public opinion as being ineffective. <sup>43</sup> This view enables both researchers and commentators alike to view the concept of public opinion as a form of communication in national politics; for not only are influential actors able to draw from the various views that have the potential to influence their decisions, it allows us to comprehend the "playing field." How then does this potentially influential aspect of one's opinion relate to the American public support of the United Nations work and its overall system? To answer this question, we analyze the concept of public opinion in various realms including trust, foreign aid, foreign policy, and the like which will be elaborated upon in the upcoming sections of this paper.

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<sup>41</sup>Herberichs, Gerard. "On Theories of Public Opinion and International Organization." *Public Opinion Quarterly*. 30.4, p624-636, 1966.

<sup>42</sup>Goldsmith, Benjamin and Horiuchi Yusaku. "In Search of Soft Power: Does Foreign Public Opinion Matter for US Foreign Policy?" *World Politics*, Vol. 64, No. 3, p555-585. July 2012. Web.

<sup>43</sup>Jaeger, Hans-Martin. "World Opinion and the Founding of the United Nations: Governmentalizing International Politics." *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 14, No. 4, p589-618. December 2008

The ideas identified above by scholars such as Jaeger, Herberichs, and others, prove to be useful on a national scale when identifying the key relationship between the American public's opinion and the UN. In addition, the American public's view of the organization is potentially vital to its success meaning that the public's view may be shaped into a trust for the international body leading to greater support of its work.<sup>44</sup>

### *Trust and Public Opinion*

What does it mean for the American public to trust in the UN's work? Trusting an international organization which, in a way, serves to build consensus among states can be one of the underlying factors in support or disapproval of the UN in the American public's eye. This element, as it is described in the study by Brewer and his colleagues, introduces a new aspect of understanding political trust for an organization such as the UN. Though essential, it is not entirely what I hope to defend in this paper. The American public's support/ disapproval of the UN can be a result of trust or lack thereof of the international body. For realists, however who measure trust in terms of self-security and a state's capabilities, this particular emphasis on trust does not hold true.<sup>45</sup> Despite this, the importance of trust as a potentially influential element is highlighted by Hetherington when he concludes that a low level of political trust creates an environment in which it becomes more difficult for leaders to succeed.<sup>46</sup> Lewis and Nesselroth also provide their viewpoints on "public trust" for leaders by emphasizing the significant link between

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<sup>44</sup>Brewer, Paul et al. "International Trust and Public Opinion about World Affairs", American Journal of Political Science, p93-109, Vol. 48, No. 1, January 2004

<sup>45</sup> Bilgic, Ali. "Trust in World Politics: Converting 'identity' Into a Source of Security Through Trust-Learning." Australian Journal of International Affairs. 68.1, Jan2014, p49

<sup>46</sup> Hetherington, Marc J. "The Political Relevance of Political Trust", The American Political Science Review, 92.4, p791-808, December 1998

action or inaction and the public's expressed preferences.<sup>47</sup> The link between trust and domestic public opinion is analyzed and measured in these scholarly works as a shaping mechanism of public support for policies, leaders, government, and the like. Although they do not particularly focus upon the central aim of this thesis, the works offer up insightful points on the significance of domestic public opinion and trust.

Do Americans trust other states? Paul Brewer and his colleagues come to a somewhat split decision as a result of the panel study they conducted. While some believe that America is surrounded by trustworthy states, others are certain that the US is surrounded by states pursuing their own self-interest and which are therefore untrustworthy as a result.<sup>48</sup> This idea of international trust as a supplementary element in determining the possible decline in public support for the UN, and the fourth hypothesis to be tested in this thesis, will be analyzed further in the data, hypotheses, and methods section of this paper. Citizens with low levels of international trust, defined by Brewer et al as the decision to give or deny other states the benefit of the doubt in terms of cooperative efforts, are sceptical of US intervention in world affairs while citizens with greater levels of international trust encourage more cooperative efforts among states.<sup>49</sup>

### *Public Opinion and Foreign Aid*

The concept of public opinion and support for the United Nations stretches beyond trust. Two common perceptions arise when studying foreign aid and public

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<sup>47</sup>Lewis, Carol W. and Nesselroth Saul H. "Public Opinion on Government and Morality."Public Integrity.17.1, p19-35. Winter 2014-2015.

<sup>48</sup>Brewer et al. "Do Americans Trust Other Nations? A Panel Study", Social Science Quarterly, Vol. 86, No. 1, p36-51, March 2005

<sup>49</sup> Brewer et al. "Do Americans Trust Other Nations? A Panel Study", Social Science Quarterly, Vol. 86, No. 1, p36-51, March 2005

opinion: first, the public's opinion on foreign aid simply does not matter very much, a view advanced by Jacobs and Page; and second, the public is certainly not well informed about foreign aid matters.<sup>50</sup> These subjects, Helen Milner and Dustin Tingley, believe are essentially false. With nearly 70% of the American public aware of the World Bank, although, as shown by their results, only 29% of the public is aware of USAID, the idea that the public is completely ignorant about foreign aid ought to not be adopted.<sup>51</sup> Second, in regards to the public's opinion not having an impact upon foreign policy, the authors find that this is not the case. They conclude, on the basis of their findings, that countries with greater levels of public support for foreign aid are more likely to spend more on aid.<sup>52</sup>

This idea, in a way, rejects the notion that the public's opinion does not matter, according to Milner and Tingley. According to scholars such as Jacobs and Page, however, this is not the case for they clearly state in their work that public opinion is of very low relevance in explaining foreign policy decisions.<sup>53</sup> How do we relate this to the American public's support of the UN? Needless to say, the United Nations is a multilateral organization which provides aid to the neediest states. In this regard, the organization's member states are dedicated to this precise goal in providing both financial and physical aid in a number of possible ways. Relatively, the United States appears to be vividly engaged in providing financial support to the United Nations missions aimed at lending a helping way in any way that it sees fit.

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<sup>50</sup>Milner, H. and Tingley, D. (2013). Public Opinion and Foreign Aid: A Review Essay. *International Interactions*, 39(3), p389-401. Web.

<sup>51</sup>Milner, H. and Tingley, D. (2013). Public Opinion and Foreign Aid: A Review Essay. *International Interactions*, 39(3), p389-401. Web

<sup>52</sup>Milner, H. and Tingley, D. (2013). Public Opinion and Foreign Aid: A Review Essay. *International Interactions*, 39(3), p389-401. Web

<sup>53</sup>Jacobs, Lawrence R. and Page, Benjamin I. "Who Influences U.S. Foreign Policy?", *American Political Science Review*, 99.1, p107-123, February 2005

As a donor country, the public's view on the amount of aid provided to the United Nations may potentially explain support for the international body. Diven and Constantelos find, however, that Americans tend to overestimate the amount of assistance that is actually provided to the United Nations, in regards to US dues paid and the like. Thus, they argue that basing the decline in support for the UN on the notion that the US spends too much on the organization is based on a faulty assumption.<sup>54</sup> They emphasize that foreign aid of all types represents just 1% of the US budget; this idea, if highlighted at greater length, they believe would increase the public support for aid among Americans.<sup>55</sup> Wang adds that the US government has, indeed, successfully utilized foreign aid programs to put in place initiatives that are vital to America's national interest; reinforcing the notion that the provision of foreign aid has the potential to become beneficial for the American people and therefore ought to not be a contributing factor to the overall decline in support for the United Nations. These benefits include, but are certainly not restricted to, inducing support of US policies amongst recipient states, with undoubtedly sceptical inputs from other researchers on the linkage.<sup>56</sup> This is reflected in Wang's conclusion where he emphasizes that the opponents of US foreign assistance have questioned the effectiveness of these programs in promoting US national interests as well as highlighted the ungratefulness of the recipients of US aid.<sup>57</sup> As it is depicted, generosity may play a part in support for the organization.

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<sup>54</sup>Diven, Polly, and John Constantelos. "Explaining Generosity: A Comparison of US and European Public Opinion on Foreign Aid." *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 7.2 (2009): p118-138. Web.

<sup>55</sup>Diven, Polly, and John Constantelos. "Explaining Generosity: A Comparison of US and European Public Opinion on Foreign Aid." *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 7.2 (2009): p118-138. Web.

<sup>56</sup> Wang, T.Y. "U.S. Foreign Aid and U.N. Voting." *International Studies Quarterly* 40.1 (1999):p199-210: n. Web.

<sup>57</sup>Wang, T.Y. "U.S. Foreign Aid and U.N. Voting." *International Studies Quarterly* 40.1 (1999):p199-210: n. Web.

## *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy*

Does public opinion have the potential to influence presidential decisions? To which degree are presidents more likely to incorporate mass preferences into their decision making process, if public interest is high? Studying the conditions in which public opinion influences presidential decision making is essential to understanding the decline in public support for the UN. By drawing from the international relations literature and examining public attention cycles, Knecht and Weatherford shed some light on these questions by building a linkage to the public's influence on foreign policy in terms of the most salient issues. This simply means that the public's attention is more often directed towards crises and depending upon the degree of attention given to a particular issue, the potential influence upon policy decisions increases.<sup>58</sup> This idea may certainly hold true in examining UN and US relations for if the United Nations' matters truly do not appear to be at the top of the agenda of the American public, it may not be considered as salient when taking into consideration foreign policy decisions. Knecht and Weatherford highlight that public opinion serves as a link between leaders and the public by encouraging and at times even pressuring action, but this only works for issues the public finds salient which might not be the case with much of the work that the UN does.

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Milner and Tingley reinforce the notion that public opinion often constrains leaders from stepping too far out of line; in the same manner elite attitudes often shape

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<sup>58</sup>Knecht Thomas and Weatherford Stephen. *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: The Stages of Presidential Decision Making*, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 3, p705-727. September 2006

<sup>59</sup>Knecht Thomas and Weatherford Stephen. *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: The Stages of Presidential Decision Making*, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 3, p705-727. September 2006

public beliefs as well.<sup>60</sup> If the American public really is not as vested in the work of the UN and the system as a whole, this may potentially be a factor in explaining the low level of acceptance for the organization.

### *Public Opinion and “Strengthening” the United Nations*

The topic of strengthening the entire international body is broad and so in order to understand the subject we must, first, specify the manners in which this can potentially be done. In furthering the discussion on this idea, John Bolton, Former US Ambassador to the United Nations, suggests that strengthening, and perhaps even reforming, the organization would be in the national interests of the United States, and that doing so will require the US to “take the lead” as the host country.<sup>61</sup> He advocates that this can be done by eliminating the mandatory contributions imposed on states to contribute to the UN budget (especially the United States which contributes the largest percentage at 22 percent) and switching to a more voluntary system in which each country donates as much as it wants to UN programs that it considers effective and gives less or nothing to those that it deems ineffective; this he believes will transform the organization and make it more effective by allowing for more attention and resources to be directed to the more responsive programs.<sup>62</sup>

In addition, the talk of strengthening the role of the United Nations ought to involve the increased use of force to safeguard international security and human rights,

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<sup>60</sup>Milner, H. and Tingley, D. (2013). Public Opinion and Foreign Aid: A Review Essay. *International Interactions*, 39(3), p389-401.

<sup>61</sup> Bolton, John. “Reforming the United Nations.” *Brown Journal of World Affairs*. 14.2, p11-21, Summer 2008.

<sup>62</sup> Bolton, John. “Reforming the United Nations.” *Brown Journal of World Affairs*. 14.2, p11-21, Summer 2008.



Husketh and Ulbrick argue. They use the UN's failure in Rwanda to make this case by basing the failure on the fact that the UN Security Council made it "abundantly clear" that General Dallaire, former Commander of UN Forces in Rwanda, and his forces were simply there to observe and not intervene, despite Dallaire's efforts to obtain a mandate from the council to stop the killing. The authors recognize, however, that the council's willingness to strengthen the role of the organization by adopting more humanitarian intervention through the preventative use of force when necessary will prove to be difficult.<sup>63</sup>

#### *Public Opinion and Human Rights*

Another possible reason for the poor sentiment towards the organization may be the generally low priority that Americans typically place on human rights issues. Davis, Murdie, and Steinmetz echo this notion in their study on testing the effects of public opinion on human rights and human rights issues. By examining an extended dataset of Human Rights International Organizations (HROs), the authors are able to deduce that a low level of priority is placed upon human rights issues. Yet, they find that HROs do, in fact, impact public opinion, concluding that increased HRO shaming leads to a more negative domestic opinion regarding human rights conditions.<sup>64</sup> As the authors elaborate upon in their study, the public will not pressure a state to become more involved and to act if they do not feel as though human rights abuses are, indeed, happening or are of

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<sup>63</sup> Husketh, Eric and Ulbrick, Trevor J. "Reforming the United Nations: The Use of Force to Safeguard International Security and Human Rights." *International Law Forum du Droit International*. Jun2005, 7.2, p129.

<sup>64</sup> Davis, David R., Murdie, Amanda, Steinmetz, Coty Garnett. "Makers and Shapers: Human Rights INGOs and Public Opinion", *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1, p199-224, February 2012

utmost importance at that very time. Thus, the state will potentially see less of a priority to act.

The priority given to human rights action abroad takes a partisan turn with more Democrats in favor of more action as opposed to Republicans, polls show.<sup>65</sup> What may drive this divide for Democrats to be twice likely as Republicans to promote more human rights action abroad? More obviously, this partisan gap can simply be explained in terms of both parties' ideologies and overall beliefs. In explaining the general support for the organization as opposed to human rights action abroad more specifically, research sheds light upon the divide by presenting the concept of multilateralism and the Republican view that as long as it produces results, it is, in fact, acceptable; and on the Democrats' view of multilateralism as a slower measure and acceptance of it as a means within itself.

<sup>66</sup> In other words, this simply means that Republicans will be more accepting of multilateralism if it reaps a number of tangible or concrete benefits while Democrats believe in multilateralism as an effective tool that does not necessarily need to produce fast results, and that its structure is rather designed to achieve success and so therefore, it will eventually deliver. When including human rights, more specifically, the issue of salience is, once again presented. Is it a priority to the American public, both Republicans and Democrats alike? As it is presented above, Davis, Murdie, and Steinmetz inform us that it is not so.<sup>67</sup> However, a 2011 Pew poll on the American public's opinion on protecting human rights abroad states that one in four respondents claim that this subject

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<sup>65</sup>"[No Author] Views of Middle East Unchanged by Recent Events." Pew Research Center for the People and the Press RSS.N.p., 10 June 2011.

<sup>66</sup> Busby, Josh. "Beyond Reading the Tea Leaves: Using data to Understand Partisanship and Foreign Policy." Duck of Minerva. N.p., 27 Feb. 2013. Web.

<sup>67</sup>Davis, David R., Murdie, Amanda, Steinmetz, Coty Garnett. "Makers and Shapers: Human Rights INGOs and Public Opinion", Human Rights Quarterly, Vol. 34, No. 1, p199-224, February 2012

is a top foreign policy priority for the United States.<sup>68</sup> This presents an additional outlook on the thought that protecting human rights abroad is a priority for a number of people in the American public.

The Council on Foreign Relations, however, shows us the opposite side of the spectrum. More action abroad and human rights initiatives enforced is applauded in the US according to poll numbers with 70% of American respondents in favor of promoting more human rights abroad as opposed to 25% against it.<sup>69</sup> In response to this key 2009 World Public Opinion (WPO) poll, the council emphasizes in chapter 16 of the book *Public Opinion on Global Issues* that Americans are in favor of giving the United Nations greater power to play a larger role than it currently does to promote human rights and investigate human rights abuses.<sup>70</sup> More recently, the concept of multilateralism in addressing human rights abuses abroad was reflected in U.S. support for the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) which is centered on regulating the international trade in conventional weapons and transfers to human rights violators and conflict zones.<sup>71</sup> This recent shift in US support, in September 2013, from its “no vote” decision in the UNGA in 2006 to create the ATT provides a different outlook on multilateralism; a concept that was not habitually associated with conventional arms control in previous years. The recent U.S. choice for multilateralism in the case of the ATT, Jennifer Erickson argues, was intended

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<sup>68</sup> "[No Author] The United Nations: Do Americans Still Hate It?" Washington Post. The Washington Post, n.d. Web.

<sup>69</sup> "[No author] U.S. Opinion on Human Rights." Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations, p1, Nov. 2009. Web.

<sup>70</sup> "[No author] U.S. Opinion on Human Rights." Council on Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations, p1, Nov. 2009. Web.

<sup>71</sup> Erickson, Jennifer L. "Saint or Sinner? Human Rights and U.S. Support for the Arms Trade Treaty." *Political Science Quarterly*, 130.3, p.449-474, September 2015

to present a more cooperative approach to US foreign policy by the Obama administration.<sup>72</sup>

*Should the U.S. Give Up its Membership?*

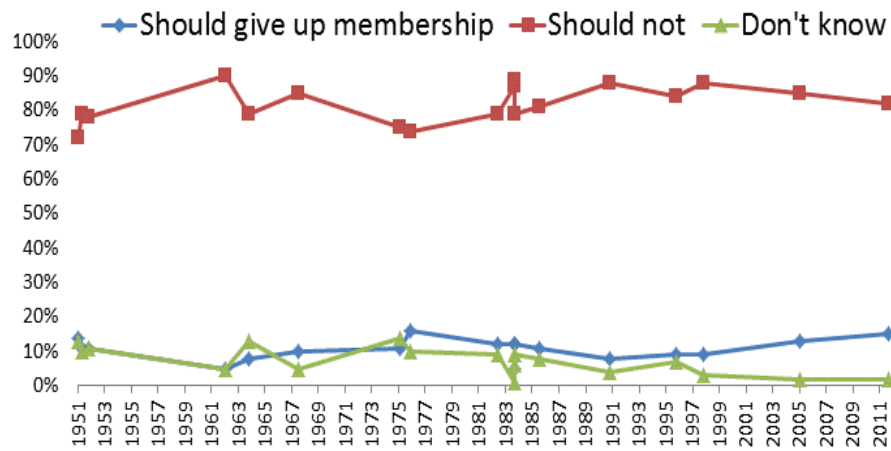
Will the presumed unfavorable view of the UN lead the public towards support of the US withdrawal from the system as a whole? Gallup regularly polls on the question of whether or not the US should withdraw its membership from the organization. Figure 1 below depicts the attitudes presented in the polls conducted between the years 1951-2011 and 1964-2014. Though it may have been presumed that this attitude towards withdrawal would come to be adopted, responses illustrate a different picture.<sup>73</sup> The American public appears to be in favor of the United States' membership and continued cooperation with the United Nations.

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<sup>72</sup>Erickson, Jennifer L. "Saint or Sinner? Human Rights and U.S. Support for the Arms Trade Treaty." *Political Science Quarterly*, 130.3, p.449-474, September 2015

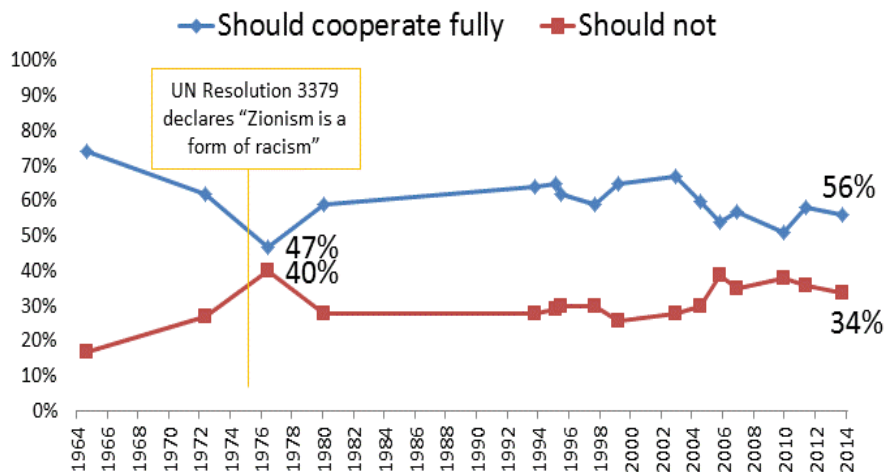
<sup>73</sup>Weldon, Kathleen. "Seventy Years of U.S. Public Opinion on the United Nations." *The Huffington Post*. p1, June 2015. Web.

## Should the US Give Up UN Membership?



Question wording 1951-1997: Do you think the United States should give up its membership in the United Nations, or not? 2005 and 2011: Should the United States give up its membership to the United Nations, or not?  
Gallup polls, except 1983 ABC News, CBS News/NYT.

## Americans' Views on Whether the United States Should Cooperate Fully with the United Nations



Gallup 1964, 1972, 1976; Civic Services 1980; Times Mirror 1993, 1995;  
PIPA 1996, 2001, Pew 1997, 1999, 2002-2014.



**Figure 2**

### **Chapter Three: Analysis of UN Performance**

#### *Peacekeeping*

Peacekeeping, a tool developed by the organization and monitored more specifically by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, has been used to help countries torn apart by conflict as means to build stability and create the conditions to achieve lasting peace. The literature on the ways in which peacekeeping has been used as a tool in managing conflict is rather broad and expansive. A number of studies have illustrated both the successes and failures of the UN's peacekeeping missions. Ghoniem proposes that the success of UN peacekeeping missions is partially dependent upon the use of multinational regional peacekeeping forces in its operations to prevent the nation being aided from believing that a foreign force is imposing its power and changing its customs. She presents the example of UN peacekeeping efforts in East Timor in which she proposes that the cooperation between regional and UN forces made for significant progress in the region, even though the nation still suffers from many problems.<sup>74</sup> Though it is a rather broad topic to undertake, UN peacekeeping is one that must be explored when studying the overall support for the organization. We begin our exploration of the topic by examining other researchers' take on the missions' successes and failures.

What are the factors behind the successes and failures of United Nations Peacekeeping? The failures behind UN peacekeeping missions have been painted as being possibly damaging to the UN's reputation and potentially undermining the charter

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<sup>74</sup> Ghoniem, Amira M. "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Improvements for Mission Success." *Ethics of Development in a Global Environment*. P1-24, 2003

of the United Nations of promoting peace and international security in our world.<sup>75</sup> Bayo presents readers with a study on the missions' failures by analyzing a specific case: peacekeeping tactics in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). By using the DRC as the focal point, Bayo argues that the national interests of the member states are at the core of the failures and successes of these specific peacekeeping missions. The case of the Democratic Republic of Congo is analyzed in comparison to other similar cases including Macedonia, Liberia, and Somalia. Above all he finds that the personal interests of member states play a role in the failures of the peacekeeping missions because they have the strong potential to block progress.<sup>76</sup>

Allen and Yuen reiterate and emphasize this point in their analysis of the total amount of influence that the United Nations, itself, exerts during a peacekeeping mission; they do so by presenting their results which show that the UN is greatly under the influence of powerful states determining its success in peacekeeping missions.<sup>77</sup> The member states' own interests play a role in peacekeeping in a number of ways. One of the ways in which national interests are placed in the picture is through the consensus that must be reached in order for a mission to be fully supported. This consensus is not always reached as it was seen in a 1999 peacekeeping mission in Bosnia that former Secretary General Boutros-Ghali had not approved of for numerous reasons including the lack of a

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<sup>75</sup> Bayo, Ogunrotifa Ayodeji. "The Factors Behind Successes and Failures of United Nations Peacekeeping Missions: A Case of the Democratic Republic of Congo." *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences* 3.4 (2012): n. p914-932. Web.

<sup>76</sup> Bayo, Ogunrotifa Ayodeji. "The Factors Behind Successes and Failures of United Nations Peacekeeping Missions: A Case of the Democratic Republic of Congo." *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences* 3.4 (2012): n. p914-932. Web.

<sup>77</sup> Allen, Susan Hannah. "The Politics of Peacekeeping: UN Security Council Oversight Across Peacekeeping Missions." *International Studies Quarterly* 58.3 (2014): n. p621-632. Web.

settlement amongst participants.<sup>78</sup> Undoubtedly, lack of consensus can certainly “shake up” a peacekeeping mission if all parties involved are not utilizing the same language.

In addition, the success of a UN Peacekeeping mission is also, in part, dependent on the effective engagement of peacekeepers during the mission and the overall full contribution of UN personnel in peacekeeping operations.<sup>79</sup> As Bayo presents the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo, a failure of the UN Peacekeeping included the inability of peacekeepers to adequately provide civilian protection. MONUC or the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in DRC adopted a more “passive” role in resolving the conflict in the country despite the need for more aggressive measures to protect civilians especially in the areas where violence was made more prominent.<sup>80</sup>

Additionally, when speaking of UN peacekeeping failures, the case of the Rwanda genocide comes to mind where about 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered amidst a devastating civil war. The organization’s lack of valiance is portrayed in powerful films such as “Hotel Rwanda” and “Sometimes in April”, depicting civilians as being left to “fend for themselves” in the horrifying face of war. Additionally, if UN peacekeeping efforts are utterly dependent on honoring the national interests of the member states involved, the mechanics and very foundation of a mission can be “shaken”; making the possibility to achieve full success extremely difficult.

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<sup>78</sup> Allen, Susan Hannah. "The Politics of Peacekeeping: UN Security Council Oversight Across Peacekeeping Missions." *International Studies Quarterly* 58.3 (2014): n. p621-632. Web.

<sup>79</sup> Allen, Susan Hannah. "The Politics of Peacekeeping: UN Security Council Oversight Across Peacekeeping Missions." *International Studies Quarterly* 58.3 (2014): n. p621-632. Web.

<sup>80</sup> Bayo, Ogunrotifa Ayodeji. "The Factors Behind Successes and Failures of United Nations Peacekeeping Missions: A Case of the Democratic Republic of Congo." *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences* 3.4 (2012): n. p914-932. Web.



### *Support for the UN*

In discussing American support for the organization, it is essential to take into consideration poll results. With more Americans believing that the UN is doing a poor rather than good job by 57% to 35% according to Gallup poll results, how does Peacekeeping play a part in these numbers? Figure 3 illustrates these US attitudes towards the United Nations.<sup>81</sup> It appears that the public is supportive of the organization but doubts its assertiveness. It would even appear that the American public supports the organization as long as, the conditions presented in regards to its effectiveness, are met. Let us discuss the possible correlation between United Nations Peacekeeping efforts and the support or lack of support for the international body more generally.

The United States has been actively involved in UN Peacekeeping. The United States Department of State estimates a total of \$2.6 billion dollars was given to UN peacekeeping operations in the year 2010, \$1.92 billion in the year 2013, and an estimated 28.38% (making the U.S. the highest contributor) of the total assessed contributions to UN peacekeeping from 2013-2015.<sup>82</sup> Although the US is not one of the largest contributors of personnel to UN peacekeeping missions, when attributing the American public's opinion to these calculated figures, 75% of Americans appear to approve of US troops participating in peacekeeping forces under UN command.<sup>83</sup> The United States' active role on the ground in the post-cold war can be seen in numerous missions, with the likes of Somalia in the year 1993, which brought the unfortunate

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<sup>81</sup>Dugan, Andrew, and Nathan Wendt. "Solid Majority of Americans Say UN Doing a Poor Job." Solid Majority of Americans Say UN Doing a Poor Job. P1, 25 Feb. 2014. Web.

<sup>82</sup>[No author]"Financing Peacekeeping. United Nations Peacekeeping." UN News Center. UN, n.d. p-1, Web. 2015

<sup>83</sup> [No author]"Financing Peacekeeping. United Nations Peacekeeping." UN News Center. UN, n.d. p1-1, Web. 2015

circumstance of numerous US soldiers killed in the infamous “Black Hawk Down” incident. US involvement in the missions, however, may not necessarily entail the full support of the American public.

### *Americans Rate the Job Performance of the United Nations*

Do you think the United Nations is doing a good job or a poor job in trying to solve the problems it has had to face?

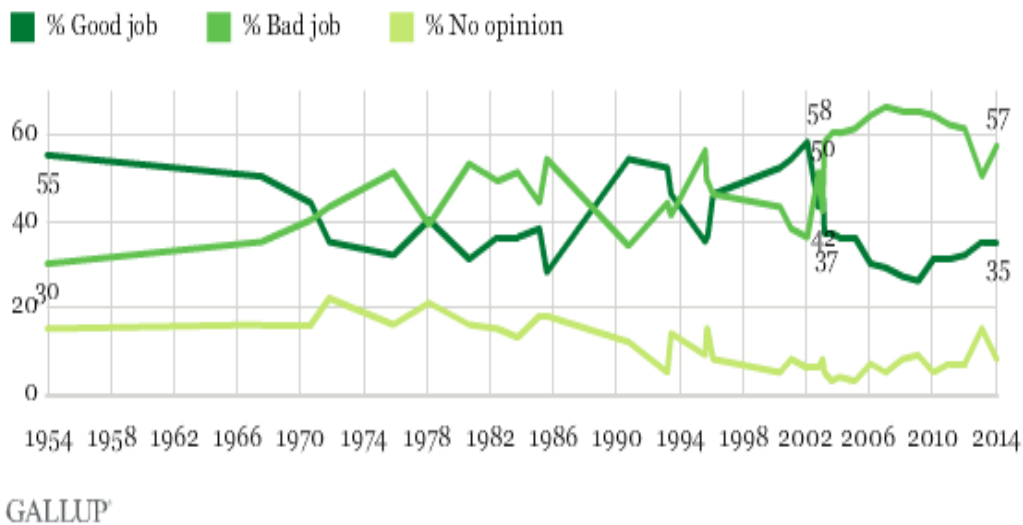


Figure 3

As it is depicted in the Gallup table above (figure 3), and also in line with the hypothesis of this research, we are able to see a decline in American public support of the United Nations between the years 2002 and 2014.<sup>84</sup>

### *Is the United Nations an effective institution?*

<sup>84</sup>Dugan, Andrew, and Nathan Wendt. "Solid Majority of Americans Say UN Doing a Poor Job." Gallup. P1-1, 25 Feb. 2014. Web.

This viewpoint as an element in understanding the decline in American public support for the UN stands as the fifth hypothesis of this paper. The overall performance of the organization itself has the noteworthy potential to serve as a logical determinant of the level of popular support it receives which serves as “hypothesis 5” of this thesis.<sup>85</sup>

This view of the UN, in regards to its effectiveness, can even be taken a step further in analyzing partisan differences among the American public. Studies have illustrated the idea that Republicans, as opposed to Democrats, are most likely to demonstrate an “against the UN.” attitude based upon Republican views and principles (not to be ignored, independents were seen as “in between” the equation).<sup>86</sup> The strong divide in the multilateral institution based upon a 72% favorable view of the international body from Democrats, with only 41% from Republicans reinforces the significance of partisanship in analyzing the “for or against” the UN concept.<sup>87</sup> With these studies, we are able to see that the party with which one identifies can be a driving factor in influencing their view of the United Nations system as well as its work. This appears to be plausible, for the system most closely in line with one’s beliefs would most likely be appreciated. These partisan differences partially exist due to both parties’ perceptions of multilateralism, as it was discussed above.<sup>88</sup>

In analyzing support for the UN’s Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), 87% of Americans are receptive to the UN’s goal of eradicating poverty and to the United

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<sup>85</sup>Lyon, Alynna. "Rejecting One's Protege? American Media, Public Opinion and the United Nations." *International Studies Association* (2008): n. p1-29, 12. Web.

<sup>86</sup>Kelly, Robert. "The United Nations and American Public Opinion | Duck of Minerva. P1-1, 27 Oct. 2013. Web.

<sup>87</sup>[No author] "UN Retains Strong Global Image." *Pew Research Centers Global Attitudes Project RSS*. P1-1, 17 Sept. 2013. Web.

<sup>88</sup>Busby, Josh. "Beyond Reading the Tea Leaves: Using data to Understand Partisanship and Foreign Policy." *Duck of Minerva*. P1, 27 Feb. 2013. Web.

States' efforts in helping to attain this goal.<sup>89</sup> Based upon the figures and attitudes discussed above, it would appear that the American public sees a need for the institution; however, the unfavorable view and decline in its support may stem from its perceived "ineffectiveness,"<sup>90</sup> as it will be outlined in the upcoming sections of this paper.

With its many limitations, including various financial restraints and the lack of its own military forces,<sup>91</sup> the UN has maintained its credible reputation centered upon the promotion of peace and security, development, and human rights. When surveyed as a whole, a median 58% of Americans have expressed a favorable view of the international body as opposed to the 27% against the institution.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup>Bristol, Nellie. "Do UN Global Development Goals Matter to the United States?" Center for Strategic & International Studies (n.d.): n. p1-15. May 2013. Web.

<sup>90</sup>Bristol, Nellie. "Do UN Global Development Goals Matter to the United States?" Center for Strategic & International Studies (n.d.): n. p1-15. May 2013. Web.

<sup>91</sup>Pellicer, Olga. "Successes and Weaknesses of Recent United Nations Operations in the Field of International Security." *International Social Science Journal* 47.144 (1995): p305-313 Web.

<sup>92</sup>[No author] "UN Retains Strong Global Image." Pew Research Centers Global Attitudes Project RSS. P1-1, 17 Sept. 2013. Web.

## Chapter Four: Data, Hypotheses, and Method

To explain the potential decline in US popular support for the United Nations I analyze data from the Gallup Organization.<sup>93</sup> I also examine case studies presented by other scholars in determining the reason for the decline.

### *Dependent Variable*

My main goal in this paper is to determine what factor(s) best explain(s) the decline in American popular support for the United Nations. In the preceding sections of this thesis, I have presented different accounts on this subject from scholars attesting to a possible decline in public support by providing their own inputs on the subjects. The potential decline in US public support for the UN may be a result of numerous elements, four of which I have grouped into six different hypotheses identified in the “Independent Variables” section below. My dependent variable in this thesis is the level of American public support for the UN measured with the six hypotheses, and independent variables, listed below.

### *Independent Variables*

In this thesis I present six hypotheses in the hopes of explaining the decline in American support for the United Nations:

**Hypothesis 1:** The decline in US popular support is a result of the US contribution to the overall UN budget.

**Hypothesis 2:** The decline in US popular support is a result of popular belief that the UN potentially impedes on the sovereignty of the United States.

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<sup>93</sup> [No author]. Gallup, Inc. “About Gallup”. P1-1. 2015

**Hypothesis 3:** The decline in US popular support for the UN is caused by negative media coverage of the United Nations.

**Hypothesis 4:** The decline in American popular support for the United Nations is explained by a decline in international trust more generally.

**Hypothesis 5:** The decline in US popular support for the United Nations is due to the popular belief that the UN is ineffective.

**Hypothesis 6:** The decline in US popular support for the UN is explained by the 2002-2003 Iraq war and the failure of the US to secure UN Security Council approval for it.

Hypothesis 1: The Decline in US popular support is a result of the United States' contribution to the overall UN budget.

This idea, as was presented in the literature review section of this paper, was addressed by Schaefer and Bond. While Schaefer believed that US contribution to the UN budget is quite large;<sup>94</sup> Bond argued that this is not the case, for the sum donated to the UN is relatively small and in fact “constant”.<sup>95</sup> The US is the largest contributor to the UN budget at 22 percent. Assessments from the Committee on Contributions at the United Nations, show a “steady” or concrete amount of US contributions remaining constant at 22 percent, from 2012-2015.<sup>96</sup> The second largest contributor to the UN budget is the United Kingdom with 6 percent in the year 2012 and remaining constant at

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<sup>94</sup> Schaefer, Brett D. "U.S. Funding of the United Nations Reaches All-Time High." The Heritage Foundation. *Foreign Aid and Development*, p1, 13 Aug. 2010. Web.

<sup>95</sup> Bond, Alison. "U.S. Funding of the United Nations: Arrears Payments as an Indicator of Multilateralism." *Berkeley Journal of International Law* 21.3 (2003): n. p703-714. Web.

<sup>96</sup> [No author] "Regular Budget and Working Capital Fund Assessments 1994-2015." UN Committee on Contributions. New York. P1-1. 2015.

5 percent from 2013-2015.<sup>97</sup> The committee provides a detailed breakdown of U.S. contributions to the UN budget from 1994-2015, which shows that the United States' contribution to the budget has remained constant since the year 2001.<sup>98</sup> This idea suggests that the constant nature of the US contribution to the UN budget cannot explain a variation in public support for the UN. Although it is the UN's largest contributor, the fact that its yearly donations are generally consistent make for determining a decline in support rather difficult. Therefore, I reject H1.

Hypothesis 2: The Decline in US public support is a result of popular belief that the UN potentially impedes on the sovereignty of the United States.

In finding support for this hypothesis, I have analyzed a number of scholarly sources addressing this question. Former UN Ambassador John Bolton has made the claim that the United Nations has moved from facilitating diplomacy among states to supplanting them altogether by acting for them and impeding upon their political independence.<sup>99</sup> Wind analyzes different accounts from the US government and American observers in determining whether international organizations such as the UN, and more specifically the International Criminal Court, challenge the sovereignty of the United States.<sup>100</sup> Although former secretary general of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, viewed the establishment of the ICC as a stepping stone toward thoroughly addressing universal human rights violations and bolstering international law, members of the

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<sup>97</sup> [No author] "Regular Budget and Working Capital Fund Assessments 1994-2015." UN Committee on Contributions. New York. P1-1. 2015.

<sup>98</sup> [No author] "Regular Budget and Working Capital Fund Assessments 1994-2015." UN Committee on Contributions. New York. P1-1. 2015.

<sup>99</sup> Gries, Peter H. "The Politics of American Foreign Policy: How Ideology Divides Liberals and Conservatives Over Foreign Affairs." Stanford University Press. P1-325, 2014. Print.

<sup>100</sup> Wind, Marlene. "Challenging Sovereignty? The USA and the establishment of the International Criminal Court." Ethics and Global Politics. 2.2, p83-108, 2009. Web.

previous administration, including former Senator John Ashcroft, were sceptical of this new court;<sup>101</sup> believing that the criminal court would greatly impede on US sovereignty by “taking the power” away from the United States to address crimes and punishment.<sup>102</sup> Despite evidence produced by Wind, however, she concludes that it is not possible to draw any firm conclusion addressing the thought that the ICC truly challenges US sovereignty; the cause of this she states is because sovereignty will remain a social construction rather than an objective that can be settled at once.<sup>103</sup> Makinda echoes this stated conclusion for he argues that state sovereignty is an evolving concept that cannot be “pinned down” to a single purpose for it legitimizes both internal political control within a state and the mechanisms for enhancing international order and security.<sup>104</sup> In addition, to the arguments presented above it is essential to take into consideration that the US is, indeed, a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council with veto power, allowing it to reject any action deemed unfavorable. With this, it is difficult to support the argument that the UN has the power to threaten US sovereignty. Therefore, I reject H2.

### Hypothesis 3: Media Coverage

Ingrid Lehmann concludes in her analysis of UN Peacekeeping and the media that no one other than the peacekeeping operation itself can be relied upon to report accurately about its main goals and activities, therefore it must have the capacity to

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<sup>101</sup> Wind, Marlene. “Challenging Sovereignty? The USA and the establishment of the International Criminal Court.” *Ethics and Global Politics*. 2.2, p83-108, 2009. Web.

<sup>102</sup> Wind, Marlene. “Challenging Sovereignty? The USA and the establishment of the International Criminal Court.” *Ethics and Global Politics*. 2.2, p83-108, 2009. Web.

<sup>103</sup> Wind, Marlene. “Challenging Sovereignty? The USA and the establishment of the International Criminal Court.” *Ethics and Global Politics*. 2.2, p83-108, 2009. Web.

<sup>104</sup> Makinda, Samuel M. “The United Nations and State Sovereignty: Mechanism for Managing International Security.” *Australian Journal of Political Science*. 33.1, p101-115. March 1998.



“convey its own story” upon arrival.<sup>105</sup> By examining case studies, including the case of the peacekeeping mission during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda (UNAMIR), the peacekeeping operation in Haiti (UNMIH) and others, she finds that negative images of operations in Rwanda, Haiti, Somalia and the like, no doubt affected public perceptions of these missions and subsequently lowered the level of support in key contributing member states, including the United States.<sup>106</sup> Negative images of peace operation, she believes, can impact the entire peace process as a whole by painting a picture alluding to the operation’s “ineffectiveness” which contributes to the erosion of support for the United Nations and its peacekeeping missions. Lehmann takes into consideration the accessibility of primary documentation, the availability for interviews of officials directly involved with the peacekeeping operations, the quality of secondary sources, and much more in her analysis of the media’s reports on UN peacekeeping operations.<sup>107</sup> For example, in the case of UNAMIR, she finds that a state of “miscommunication” made for inadequate media reporting of the UN peacekeeping operation in Rwanda during the genocide in 1994.<sup>108</sup> This came as a result of the hate campaigns broadcasted by the belligerent, the unfortunate killings, and the UN’s inability to intervene due to the lack of a mandate to act, which the media portrayed as the UN simply being an “observer” in the face of violence.<sup>109</sup> On the other side of the spectrum the rise in negative support can

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<sup>105</sup> Lehmann, Ingrid. “Peacekeeping and Public Information: Caught in the Crossfire.” Frank Cass Publishers, London. P1-175. 1999. Print.

<sup>106</sup> Lehmann, Ingrid. “Peacekeeping and Public Information: Caught in the Crossfire.” Frank Cass Publishers, London. P1-175. 1999. Print.

<sup>107</sup> Lehmann, Ingrid. “Peacekeeping and Public Information: Caught in the Crossfire.” Frank Cass Publishers, London. P1-175. 1999. Print.

<sup>108</sup> Lehmann, Ingrid. “Peacekeeping and Public Information: Caught in the Crossfire.” Frank Cass Publishers, London. P1-175. 6 1999. Print.

<sup>109</sup> Lehmann, Ingrid. “Peacekeeping and Public Information: Caught in the Crossfire.” Frank Cass Publishers, London. P1-175. 1999. Print.

also be a result of the missions' deemed failures as opposed to a potentially biased media in its entirety.

Hoffman and Hawkins echo Lehmann's thoughts in a more recent analysis of "communication" and UN Peacekeeping. They discuss the media's great ability to contribute to peace in adequately reporting peacebuilding matters, including UN peacekeeping missions.<sup>110</sup> In discussing how effective communication can build peace, they present the case of the UN's peacekeeping operation in Kosovo (UNMIK) in 2004. Negative views of UNMIK were portrayed in the media by underlying the mission's cumbersome decision making processes and presumed aloofness, and ignoring its progress in the area and key efforts for peace which tainted its credibility in Kosovo and internationally, the authors highlight. Like, Lehmann, Hoffman and Hawkins they believe that adequate reporting of UN peacekeeping missions depends on the mission itself. An example of this, they present, is UNAMIK's broadcasting of 60 examples of successful repatriations of refugees to their homes through UNHCR, in which more than \$1 million dollars was donated to the project as a result of the information provided.<sup>111</sup>

#### *Do Americans Trust the Media?*

To what extent does the American public trust the media to build their own perceptions? The Gallup Organization provided the latter end in this analysis by

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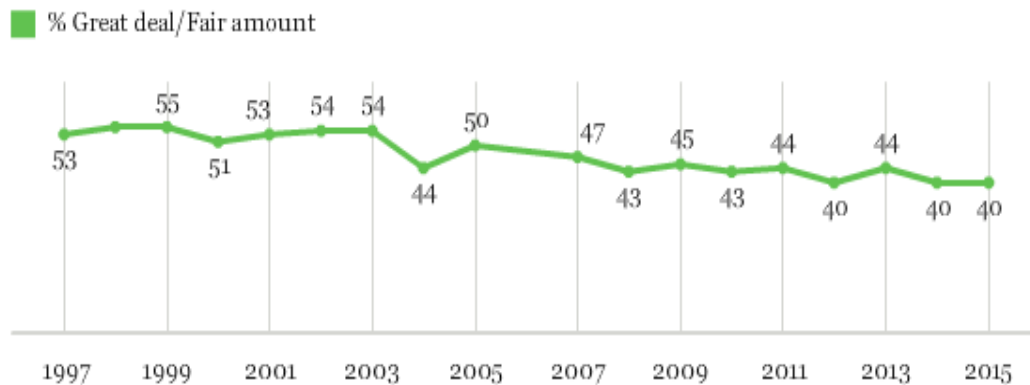
<sup>110</sup> Hoffman Julia and Hawkins Virgil. "Communication and Peace: Mapping an Emerging Field." Routledge. Edition 1. P1-346, P41. 2015. Print.

<sup>111</sup> Hoffman Julia and Hawkins Virgil. "Communication and Peace: Mapping an Emerging Field." Routledge. Edition 1. P1-346, P41. 2015. Print.

presenting a study conducted by Riffkin in which she finds that Americans' trust in the media is actually lower than presumed in terms of relying on the media for judgment.<sup>112</sup>

#### *Americans' Trust in the Mass Media*

In general, how much trust and confidence do you have in the mass media -- such as newspapers, TV and radio -- when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately and fairly -- a great deal, a fair amount, not very much or none at all?



Gallup trend since 1997

GALLUP®

Figure 4

Between 1999 and 2015, the American public's trust in the mass media has eroded from 55 percent in 1999 to 40 percent in 2015, Riffkin finds.<sup>113</sup> With only four in ten Americans reporting that they have a "fair amount" of trust in the media to report the news adequately and fully, this challenges the previously presented arguments that the media has a significant impact on the public.<sup>114</sup> With the large pool of sources on the relationship between the media and public opinion, I was able to find scholars both attesting to the media's significant impact on the public and others proposing that the

<sup>112</sup> Riffkin, Rebecca. "Americans' Trust in Media Remains at Historical Low." Gallup. P-1-1, September 28, 2015.

<sup>113</sup> Riffkin, Rebecca. "Americans' Trust in Media Remains at Historical Low." Gallup. P-1-1, September 28, 2015.

<sup>114</sup> Riffkin, Rebecca. "Americans' Trust in Media Remains at Historical Low." Gallup. P-1-1, September 28, 2015.

media is not as impactful on public opinion as it is perceived. Among the skeptics, Burk rejects the “power” of the media on public opinion for he believes that leaders and experts are the ones providing the media with its information.<sup>115</sup>

Badura challenges these notions about the media’s insignificance, however, by presenting evidence through OLS Regression results that media trust does, in fact, play a central role in moderating the persuasive impact of political messages shaping political opinions among the public.<sup>116</sup> He found that higher levels of general media trust among participants were associated with stronger positive UN policy preferences; meaning that the more positive portrayals of the UN conveyed in the media, made for greater support of UN policies.<sup>117</sup> With more arguments attesting to the media’s powerful influence on the public, I recognize H3 as an element in the American public’s perceptions of the United Nations; although additional evidence is necessary to test H3 in finding support for the decline in public support for the UN.

Hypothesis 4: International trust is a factor in explaining the decline in American popular support for the United Nations.

How much do Americans trust other states? This question in examining the declining support for the United Nations is one posed by Brewer, Aday, and Gross. Through an analysis of panel survey data in regards to the public’s trust of other states

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<sup>115</sup> James Burk, "Public Support for Peacekeeping in Lebanon and Somalia: Assessing the Casualties Hypothesis," *Political Science Quarterly*. 114.1, p53-78, Spring (1999)

<sup>116</sup> Badura, Jason. “Assembling Public Support for the United Nations: Examining the Impact of Media Trust on One’s Policy Preferences toward the United Nations - An Experimental Test.” *Midwestern Political Science Association*. P1-80, 50, 2009.

<sup>117</sup> Badura, Jason. “Assembling Public Support for the United Nations: Examining the Impact of Media Trust on One’s Policy Preferences toward the United Nations - An Experimental Test.” *Midwestern Political Science Association*. P1-80, 2009.

following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the authors conclude that declining trust in other states has important implications for explaining the public's support in world affairs and foreign policy.<sup>118</sup> International trust they conclude, due to an overwhelmingly negative review from the American public in regards to trusting other states after the attacks, is an important determinant of public opinion about world affairs.<sup>119</sup> Though this study presents a valuable outlook on a possible impact in the decline in public support, the authors' results may have changed since the study was conducted in 2005. Sources illustrating declining American trust in other states presented studies conducted before the year 2005. In subsequent years, however, the results may have been altered. With insufficient data on international trust in more recent years, this area is one that needs more attention from additional social scientists in finding a link between this variable and declining public support for the UN. Thus, I am unable to either support or reject H4 given the available evidence I can find.

Hypothesis 5: The decline in US popular support for the United Nations is due to a popular belief that the UN is ineffective.

Numerous scholars throughout my research have attested to the potential of UN performance as the main reason for the decline in public support. As portrayed by Jones and Wendt Americans believe that the United Nations is needed, but they doubt its overall effectiveness in carrying out its objectives.<sup>120</sup>

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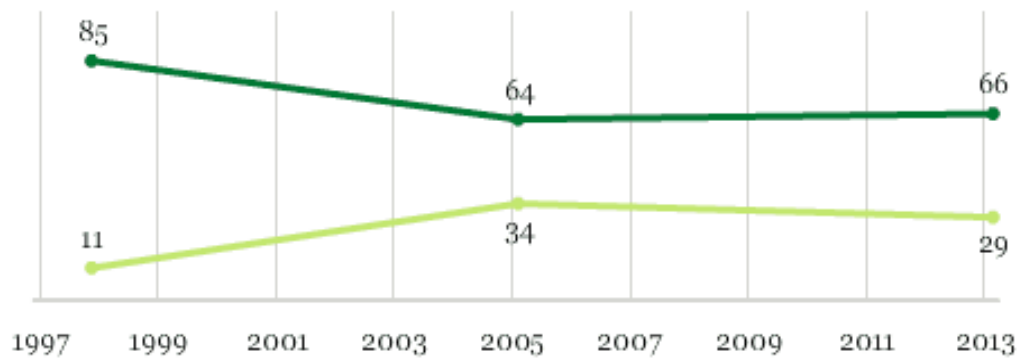
<sup>118</sup> Brewer, Paul et al. "Do Americans Trust Other Nations? A Panel Study", *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 86, No. 1, p36-51, March 2005

<sup>119</sup> Brewer, Paul et al. "Do Americans Trust Other Nations? A Panel Study", *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 86, No. 1, p36-51, March 2005

<sup>120</sup> Jones, Jeffrey M. and Wendt, Nathan. "Americans Say UN is needed, but Doubt Its Effectiveness." Gallup. P1-1, March 2013.

*In your view, does the United Nations play a necessary role in the world today, or not?*

■ % Yes    ■ % No



GALLUP

Figure 5

Figure 10 above by Jones and Wendt illustrates that two-thirds do, in fact, believe that the UN is necessary.<sup>121</sup> This table is not particularly designed to point to a decline in support but to show that the American public believes that the UN is necessary but still doubts its effectiveness. As it is discussed in Dugan and Wendt's analysis of UN performance above, although the public claims that the institution is needed, they do not believe that it is effective in its performance, with 35% believing that it is doing a "good" job in handling the problems it has had to face compared to 57% who disagree.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>121</sup> Jones, Jeffrey M. and Wendt, Nathan. "Americans Say UN is needed, but Doubt Its Effectiveness." Gallup. P1-1, March 2013.

<sup>122</sup> Dugan, Andrew, and Nathan Wendt. "Solid Majority of Americans Say UN Doing a Poor Job." Gallup. P1-1, 25 Feb. 2014. Web.

*Perceptions of Job United Nations is Doing*

	<b>Good job</b>	<b>Poor job</b>
	%	%
Men	22	72
Women	29	59
18 to 34 years	37	54
35 to 54 years	24	67
55 and older	19	72
College graduate	21	71
Some college	24	66
No college	30	61
Republicans	20	72
Independents	22	67
Democrats	34	58

Feb. 9-12, 2009

GALLUP POLL

Figure 6

Relatively, Lydia Saad, also via the Gallup Poll, presents a more detailed analysis of the US public's opinion on UN job performance, in figure 6 above, by including additional variables into the mix. She includes gender, age, education, and partisanship, in which she finds Republicans more critical of the organization than Democrats; younger adults more supportive than the older population; college graduates less supportive than those with no college education; and women overall more supportive than men. On the whole, the majority of these groups believe that the UN is doing a poor job.<sup>123</sup> Despite these results, she finds, in figure 7, below that Americans still believe that the UN is

<sup>123</sup> Saad, Lydia. "Americans Remain Critical of the United Nations." Gallup. P1-1, 2009.

necessary and that it should play a larger role in world affairs, but they deem the organization ineffective.<sup>124</sup>

*Now thinking more specifically, which of the following roles would you like to see the United Nations play in world affairs today -- should it play -- [a leading role where all countries are required to follow U.N. policies, a major role, where the U.N. establishes policies, but where individual countries still act separately when they disagree with the U.N., (or should it play) a minor role, with the U.N. serving mostly as a forum for communication between nations, but with no policy-making role]?*

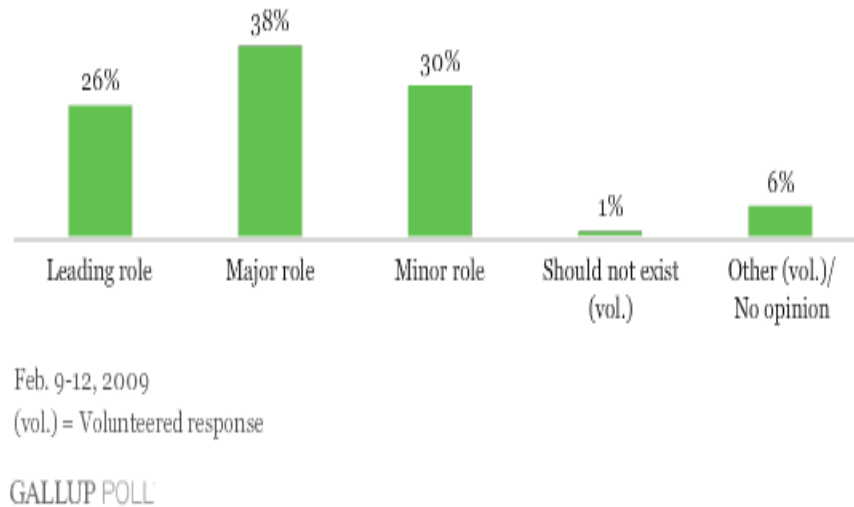


Figure 7

Hypothesis 6: The decline in US popular support for the UN is explained by the 2002-2003 Iraq war and the failure of the US to secure UN Security Council approval for it.

The Security Council- US clash on the basis of the council's belief that the Iraq war was not in conformity with the UN charter, led to erosion in support for the

<sup>124</sup> Saad, Lydia. "Americans Remain Critical of the United Nations." Gallup. P1-1, 2009.



organization.<sup>125</sup> As shown in figure 1 in the introduction of this thesis, approval ratings of the UN since 2003 have never fully recovered to their previous highs before the war.<sup>126</sup>

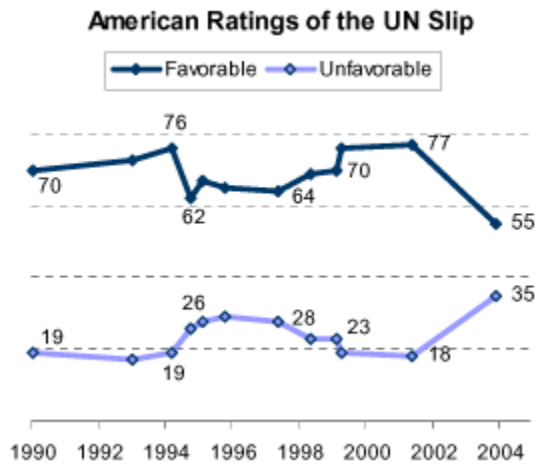


Figure 8

Statistics in figure 8 above from the Pew Research Center also show a sharp decline in favorable views of the UN between 2002 and 2004.<sup>127</sup> In addition, a 2003 Gallup poll found that 55% of respondents believed that the Security Council's lack of support for the invasion of Iraq made them have a less favorable of the UN compared to 15% who had a more favorable view, 29% who said that it did not make much of a difference, and 1% with no opinion.<sup>128</sup> Despite these numbers, figure 9 below shows us a different side. Yes, the American public's unfavorable views of the UN appeared to be on the rise from 2003-2012 but it also appears that the unfavorable views slightly declined from 61% in 2012 to 57% in 2014 and 2015.<sup>129</sup> The level of opinion for those who

<sup>125</sup> Newport, Frank. "Americans Continue to see U.N. as a poor problem solver." Gallup. P1-1, February 2015. Web.

<sup>126</sup> Newport, Frank. "Americans Continue to see U.N. as a poor problem solver." Gallup. P1-1, February 2015. Web.

<sup>127</sup> [No author] "A Year After Iraq War." Pew Research Center. P1-1. 2004.

<sup>128</sup> [No author] "United Nations." Gallup. P1-1. 2015

<sup>129</sup> [No author] "United Nations." Gallup. P1-1. 2015

believe that the UN is doing a “good job” has remained at 35 percent since 2013 compared to more unfavorable views at 32% in 2012. Because of the highs and lows in opinion without a more consistent level of opinions, H6 can only serve as partial confirmation for the decline in US popular support for the UN. The Iraq war is not the sole factor in the unfavorable views towards the UN for the unfavorable views also appear to vary during the present Obama administration, which suggests that public support for the UN may also be event sensitive as variations in opinions from Gallup depict.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> [No author] “United Nations.” Gallup. P1-1. 2015

*Do you think the United Nations is doing a good job or a poor job in trying to solve the problems it has had to face?*

	<b>Good job</b>	<b>Poor job</b>	<b>No opinion</b>
	%	%	%
2015 Feb 8-11	35	57	8
2014 Feb 6-9	35	57	8
2013 Feb 25-26	35	50	15
2012 Feb 2-5	32	61	7
2011 Feb 2-5	31	62	7
2010 Feb 1-3	31	64	5
2009 Feb 9-12	26	65	9
2008 Feb 11-14	27	65	8
2007 Feb 1-4	29	66	5
2006 Feb 6-9	30	64	7
2005 Feb 7-10 ^	36	61	3
2004 Feb 9-12	36	60	4
2003 Aug 25-26	37	60	3
2003 Mar 14-15 ^	37	58	5
2003 Jan 23-25	50	42	8
2002 Oct 21-22 ^	43	51	6
2002 Feb 4-6	58	36	6
2001 Feb 1-4	54	38	8
2000 May 18-21	52	43	5
1996 Feb 23-25	46	46	8
1995 Oct 19-22	36	49	15
1995 Sep 19-22	36	49	15
1995 Aug 28-30	35	56	9
1993 Jun 18-21	46	41	14
1993 Mar 29-31	52	44	5
1990 Oct 18-21	54	34	12
1985 Aug 13-15	28	54	18
1985 Feb 15-18	38	44	18
1983 Oct 7-10	36	51	13
1982 Jun 25-28	36	49	15
1980 Sep 12-15	31	53	16
1978 Feb 24-27	40	39	21
1975 Nov 21-24	32	51	16
1971 Oct 29-Nov 2	35	43	22
1970 Aug 25-Sep 1	44	40	16
1967 Jul 13-18	50	35	16
1953 Dec 11-16	55	30	15

^Asked of a half sample

GALLUP®

Figure 9

## Discussion

Bond addressing hypothesis 1 on the US contribution to the UN suggests that US contribution to the UN budget is not as significant as it is deemed;<sup>131</sup> this idea is later portrayed with an analysis of the “consistent” nature of the donations to the UN budget, making analyzing this hypothesis as a possible explanation for the decline in public support rather difficult.<sup>132</sup> Authors addressing hypothesis 2 on US sovereignty propose that this hypothesis cannot sufficiently be used in explaining the decline in public support;<sup>133</sup> due to the idea that state sovereignty constantly evolving.<sup>134</sup> In addition, this hypothesis cannot explain the decline due to US permanent membership in the Security Council and veto power; impeding on its sovereignty will prove difficult with the US able to reject anything deemed unfavorable with has been considered by the council. In addressing hypothesis 3 on the media’s potential impact on the decline, it appears that both sides may be valid in this debate for evidence is provided on the media’s inability to adequately portray UN engagements;<sup>135</sup> as well as evidence on Americans’ diminishing trust in the media to form their opinions to begin with.<sup>136</sup> In terms of hypothesis 4, I propose that these results may have potentially been altered in recent years, which leaves room for more studies from social scientists on this particular argument.

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<sup>131</sup> Bond, Alison. "U.S. Funding of the United Nations: Arrears Payments as an Indicator of Multilateralism." *Berkeley Journal of International Law* 21.3 (2003): n. p703-714, 705. Web.

<sup>132</sup> [No author] “Regular Budget and Working Capital Fund Assessments 1994-2015.” UN Committee on Contributions. New York. P1-1. 2015.

<sup>133</sup> Wind, Marlene. “Challenging Sovereignty? The USA and the establishment of the International Criminal Court.” *Ethics and Global Politics*. 2.2, p83-108, 2009. Web.

<sup>134</sup> Makinda, Samuel M. “The United Nations and State Sovereignty: Mechanism for Managing International Security.” *Australian Journal of Political Science*. 33.1, p101-115. March 1998.

<sup>135</sup> Lehmann, Ingrid. “Peacekeeping and Public Information: Caught in the Crossfire.” Frank Cass Publishers, London. P1-175. 1999. Print.

<sup>136</sup> Riffkin, Rebecca. “Americans’ Trust in Media Remains at Historical Low.” Gallup. P-1-1, September 28, 2015.

The different accounts presented above of the poor judgment that the organization generally obtains from the American public leads us to believe that hypothesis 5 on UN effectiveness, plays a part in the decline in popular support.<sup>137</sup> In addition, we are able to see that Americans believe that the UN ought to remain a player in world affairs despite its perceived “ineffectiveness as also lending support to this hypothesis.”<sup>138</sup> Finally, in analyzing hypothesis 6, I acknowledge the notion that the Iraq war is one factor in the decline but that it is not the only one and only offers partial confirmation for the decline due to the variations in the level of opinions over the recent decade. The results show a more inconsistent decline as opposed to a steady decrease in favorable views.

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<sup>137</sup> Dugan, Andrew, and Nathan Wendt. "Solid Majority of Americans Say UN Doing a Poor Job." Gallup. P1-1, 25 Feb. 2014. Web.

<sup>138</sup> Saad, Lydia. "Americans Remain Critical of the United Nations." Gallup. P1-1, 2009.

## **Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations**

We are able to explain the possible decline in American public support of the United Nations through a combination of hypotheses 5 and 3; whether it is based upon the presumed ineffectiveness of the organization and its deemed “poor” job performance or the media’s influence on the public via the amount and quality of coverage that is devoted to the institution. This presumed decline, however, appears to be inconsistent, with varying levels of opinion as the figures presented above depict. The American public appears to approve of the institution’s existence and its goals but to disapprove of its overall performance in attaining these objectives. They are also potentially basing their opinions of the organization on the basis of the media’s coverage although certain claims presented in this paper attested to the media’s lack of influence upon public opinion. Certainly explaining the presumed decline in public support since the Iraq War is a topic that needs to be examined further by more social scientists to present more evidence of its occurrence; I hope, however, that this thesis is a step in the direction to support the claim that American support for the international body is not as fervent as it used to be. This is problematic for the UN without the United States may become a greatly weakened institution politically and strategically for without the world’s greatest power, the UN’s legitimacy and relevancy become diminished; giving rise to its perceived ineffectiveness.

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## CURRICULUM VITAE

Joelle Marie Kouandi Angba

### EDUCATION

Indiana University

**Concentration:** Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and International Studies

**Relevant Coursework:** Fundamentals of Communication, Public Policy, Public Administration, Legal Studies, Political Theory, Business Management, Fundamentals of Development, Wealth Exchange & Power in Anthropological Perspective, Perspectives: World History 1800-Present, International Studies Capstone Seminar, Fundamentals of Public Speaking, Politics of the European Union, African Politics, Women and Politics, Web Design, The Media and Politics, American Politics, Cultural Anthropology

Indiana University

**Concentration:** Master of Arts in Political Science

**Relevant Coursework:** American Politics, Research Methods in Politics

University of Wroclaw (Poland)

**Relevant Coursework:** Intercultural Communication; Political Affairs

### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

Economic Affairs Intern with the Office of the High Representative for Least, Landlocked, and Small Island Developing States (United Nations-OHRLLS) (Feb 9<sup>th</sup> 2015 – July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015)

Assistance during conferences and in the drafting and translation of official documents

Media analysis

Compiling statistics

Data entry operations

Performing research

Managing sensitive information

Political Affairs Intern with Marion County Democrats (Aug 25<sup>th</sup> -Dec 1<sup>st</sup> 2014)

Meeting and special events planning

Data entry / Administrative operations

Voter Registration, outreach, and mobilization

Worked closely with elected officials and candidates

Administrative Assistant / Financial Analyst and Customer Service Representative for 5linx Business Services (Jan 1<sup>st</sup> - May 31<sup>st</sup> 2013)

Entrusted with the purchase and management of the service merchandise upon which clients would invest

Data entry  
Performing research

Bilingual Secretary and Administrative Assistant for FN Financial Services (May 2012-December 2012)

Administrative operations  
Coordinated meetings and appointments (Daily Tasks Organizer)  
Customer service provider

## **LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE**

President of the Moving Dance Company at IUPUI; September 2012-May 2013

Creative Show Organizer  
Programme management  
Fundraising Event Leader  
Rehearsal Supervisor

Intercultural Communication Source Leader/ Group Project Member for Study Abroad Trip to Wroclaw, Poland May 2013

Served as a lead source in providing perspectives on intercultural living experiences  
Assisted supervisor with administrative tasks, research projects, as well as editing the students' work  
Conducting interviews

Spokesperson and Human Rights Advocate for Alpha Omega Children's Foundation (NGO)

Drafting and preparing official documents for effective humanitarian action  
Advocating and promoting the organization's events  
Receptionist / Data entry operations

## **AWARDS AND HONORS**

Bourses et Aides Scolaires: Full-ride academic scholarship from the Department of Grants and Scholarships in Cote D'Ivoire

## **SKILLS AND INTERESTS**

**Languages:** English (Fluent), French (Fluent), Spanish (Functional) Russian (Functional), Italian (Functional)

**Technical:** Proficient in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)

**Interests:** Development, Politics, Economic Affairs, International Affairs, Learning Languages, Traveling, Reading